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# Ward, Mayor.

*Jovis xxj<sup>mo</sup> die April. 1681. Annoq; Regni Regis  
Caroli secundi Angl. &c. xxxiiij<sup>to</sup>.*

**T**HIS Court doth desire Mr. *Sill* to Print  
his Sermon, Preached at the *Guild-Hall*-  
Chappel, on *Good-Friday* last.

*Wagstaffe.*

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Freedom from Fear of Death, through the  
Death of Christ.

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A

S E R M O N

Preached at

GUILD-HALL-Chappel,

ON

Good-Friday,

A.D. MDCLXXXI.

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By WILLIAM SILL, Rector of *St. Austins*, and  
*St. Faiths* united, and Chaplain to the Lord Bishop of *London*.

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LONDON,

Printed for *Walter Kettilby*, at the Sign of the *Bishops-Head* in  
*St Pauls Church-Yard*, 1681.

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Freedom from Fear of Death, through the  
Death of Christ.

# SERMON

Preached at

GUILD-HALL-Chapel,

ON

## Good-Friday,

M.DCC.LXXI.

By WILLIAM STELL, Rector of St. Martin's, and  
St. Andrew's, and Chaplain to the Lord Bishop of London.

LONDON:

Printed for J. DODD, at the Sign of the Ship, in  
St. Paul's Church-yard, 1771.



The Epistle Dedicatory.

To the Right Honourable

Sir *PATIENCE* *WARD*,

Lord Mayor

Of the City of

**LONDON,**

AND TO

The Court of *ALDERMEN*.

Right Honourable,

**T***HAT* this Sermon is made publick, is  
from the humble Regard that I am ob-  
liged to pay to the *ORDER* I have re-  
ceived.

I am the less concerned for what Censure  
may pass upon the honest Plainness of it, be-  
cause I judge that I should much less have an-  
swered

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

*Answered the great Importance of the Subject, if I had affected to treat of it upon any other Grounds than what the Scripture doth give us. For the most consummate Political or Moral Discipline can afford us no Weapons more equal to encounter with the Power of Death, than any of those Arguments it can suggest to us are to obtain a Respite of the peremptory Sentence from this inexorable King of Terrors.*

*If upon this account this Discourse may obtain a favourable Acceptance, I shall have all that is aimed at by this humble Address from,*

*(Right Honourable)*

*Your most obedient,*

*and humble Servant,*

*Will. Sill.*

116mo. 4  
A

# SERMON

Preached on *Good-Friday*, at

**GUILD-HALL-CHAPPEL.**

ON

HEB. II. 14. 15.

14. — That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil;  
15. And deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage.



HE Excellency and great Usefulness of this *Epistle* to the *Hebrews*, hath been well judged to have been the cause of the main Attempts that have been made to deprive us of its Divine Authority; the consideration of which should move us to attend more earnestly to it. For whatever other Difficulties may for some time have been started by such wary Per-

B

sons

## *A Sermon Preach'd on Good-Friday;*

sons as meant no harm to Religion, to hinder the Reception of this *Epistle* with the same readiness that other parts of the holy Scriptures were admitted; yet he that well weighs the advantage we have from it, of taking a more full and clear account of the Use and Abrogation of the Jewish Ceremonies, and of Christs being the End of the Law, and of the Nature and Dignity of his Office, as Mediator between God and Men, will conclude That he that from the beginning hath ever envied Man-kind whatever might promote their happiness, hath been active in giving weight to those Scruples which if they had been pertinaciously adhered to, would so far have brought upon the Church an irreparable Loss.

But the peculiar Meditations which the Solemnity of this Day doth call us to, may yet farther offer something to us of more immediate concern; in that this *Epistle* doth fully set forth and magnifie the Priesthood of Christ, and the Vertue, Benefits, and Dignity of the one *Sacrifice* of his *Death*. Through which, seeing that we have the greatest Advantages that our fallen and miserable condition did stand in need of, and such as the Great God could not bestow upon us any more agreeable, This may more especially be presumed to have an Ascendant upon our minds, which nothing but a sottish Stupidity,

dity, or base Ingratitude can defeat, to make us acknowledge and admire the watchful Providence of God for our good, in that this Sacred Book hath now for many Ages, without the least hesitancy been received, as inspired from Gods Holy Spirit, by the Universal Church of God, and consequently to secure our heedful regard to the main Scope of it.

Which (more especially as to the former Chapters of this Epistle,) is to recommend to us the Doctrine of Christ, and to require our hearty Reception of it, and Submission of our selves to the power and efficacy of it. That we give *Heb. 2. 1.* the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip; considering with our selves what possibility there can be for us to escape, if we neglect so great Salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed by them that heard him; God also bearing them *Vet. 3, & 4* witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own Will?

Now the Reasonableness and Necessity of all this is farther laid before us by the holy Penman of this Epistle from the Dignity and Pre-eminence of the Person of Christ, not only above Moses, but far above all the great and glorious Angels of God.

# *A Sermon Preach'd on Good-Friday,*

*Heb. 1, 2, 3.*

And this partly from the Eternity of his Eternity, this Eternal Son of God being the brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person, by whom he made the Worlds, and who upholds all things by the word of his power.

*Ver. 3.*

*Heb. 2, 8, 9.*

And partly, from what this Eternal Son, after he was Incarnate, and had assumed our nature did acquire, or was conferr'd upon him; God having appointed him Heir of all things, and therefore directing us to expect all that Good which by the fall of Adam, from that Right and Capacity he was created to, we had lost, only in and through Christ, who when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; and was, for the suffering of Death, Crowned with Glory and Honour, having all things put in subjection under him. God thereby signifying, That

*Heb. 2, 16.*

that state of Humiliation, to which the Son of God was pleased to submit himself, whatever mean thoughts vain and proud men might entertain of it, was a thing highly pleasing to him, and in his infinite Wisdom directed to excellent Ends; in which his Goodness and Propensity to favour Man-kind, should be most eminently apparent to the astonishment indeed both of Men and Angels, but to the peculiar benefit of the first. For he took not on him the Nature of Angels, but he took on him the Seed of Abraham; and that in order to this infinitely good and wise End, advan-



advantageous to miserable and lost Man, even to a miracle, That he by the grace of God should taste *Heb. 2. 9.*  
Death for every Man.

And shall this which was so highly pleasing to God on the behalf of Man, not be sufficiently esteemed and valued by Man, who hath the sole benefit of it? Should not this unexpressible Condescension of the Eternal Son of God be a powerful Motive to us, to make us most freely exert the utmost Powers we have in giving a ready and affectionate entertainment to the Gospel of Christ, and in yielding a most cordial and sincere submission to it; even such as proceeding from a true love of him, may express the great sense we have of his love to us?

To this very end doth the Author of this Epistle add this consideration to others, that he had laid down, taken from the admirable Love and Condescension of the Son of God, that we should be most solicitously careful, even with watch and all earnestness, to hear his Voite To day, to exhort one another daily, while it is called To day, lest any of us should be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin; to hold fast our profession; to hold *Heb. 3. 7, 13.*  
the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end, that so we may be made partakers of Christ. And, *Heb. 4. 14.*  
seeing that we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, therefore *Heb. 3. 14.*  
to come both y<sup>e</sup> unto the Throne of Grace, that we *Heb. 4. 15.*  
may *16.*

# *A Sermon Preach'd on Good-Friday,*

may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

And that for this among other reasons, because the Compassion and Love of the Son of God hath so far stooped to the relief of sinful and miserable Man, as to be made a little lower than the Angels. Seeing that, as God, he could not die for us, he would become our Brother, and assume our Nature into the Unity of his Person, that so in our Nature thus assumed he might die for us, and deliver us not only from Death, but from all Fear of it.

Heb. 2. 9.

*Forasmuch as the Children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.*

— That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil;

*And deliver them, who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage.*

In my discoursing of which words, I will do these two things :

1. I will Explain the most material words and expressions in the Text, that we may fix upon the proper Notion of the nature of this our Bondage, and our Deliverance from it.

2. I will offer some of the most pertinent Considerations I can, to quicken our thoughts and Apprehensions of the whole matter, and to dispose us for receiving the kindly Influences of all, in such a way as may be most agreeable to the solemn



Solemn occasion of our meeting together this Day.

1. For Explication of the words, and the true Notion of the thing. The Innocency and Holiness of our blessed Saviours Life is judged to be one reason among others of what St. Peter told the Jews, *Act. 2. 24.* That it was not possible that he should be bolden of death: But this is of it self a Sufficient reason that none should be so vain as to think that when we speak of the Death of Christ, we can be supposed to understand any thing else by it, but only that Temporal Death which he suffered upon the Cross. Whereas our own case is so wholly different, that though we have the Honour to be of that Nature of which Christ did partake, yet all we being polluted and guilty before God, we shall not come up to the full sense of the Scripture, when we are told that *Death is the wages of sin*, and that the Sting of it is *sin*; nor shall we be sufficiently sensible of death, as proceeding from; and expressive of, and always accompanied with the dreadful Wrath of God, unless when we speak of that Death of which the Devil had the power; and the fear of which made men subject to Bondage all their life-time; we do, as in reason we ought, understand by it, not only the separation of the Soul and the Body, but more especially Eternal Death, and in the general the dreadful Curse in its full lati.

latitude, to which Man was obnoxious by reason of Sin ; so that the measure of the hurtfulness of the Death we speak of, is to be taken from hence, because it is the effect of Gods Wrath, and that because of Sin.

Now consequently hereupon, if we would judge aright of that *Bondage* to which men are *subject* through the *fear* of this, we must seriously think with our selves how it could be otherwise to them that are supposed to lie under the Guilt of sin, and under the Sense of the Punishment that belongs to it, but that the Malediction of God, and the approaching of a certain Judgment, Hell it self, and everlasting burnings, and all that can strike horror into the minds of men, should ever be ready to offer themselves to their thoughts ; and This so unavoidably *all their life-time*, that nothing can shew them any rational sufficient Ground to escape what they are afraid of, when they seriously think of all this without respect to Christ.

And can it be otherwise conceived, but that this must be a most wretched condition, fitly called a *Bondage*, not permitting men to do any thing with Freedom, who cannot be otherwise, but *all their life time subject* to this slavery of Sin, of the Devil, and of Death? For all these in the issue do come to the same ; and therefore the fear of Temporal death as that leads to Eternal death

death, but especially the fear of the last, as being that *Inheritance of Mans Folly*, which, as to a *Child of Wrath, Hell, and the Devil, a despised and forsaken Father*, and therefore now a *just and righteous Judge*, will appoint him as his everlasting *Portion*, in a place where there shall be nothing but *weeping and gnashing of teeth*, cannot but seise men, who being out of Christ, are obnoxious to it, with all anxiety, horror, and anguish of mind.

Prov. 14. 18.

Ephes. 2. 3.

Mat. 23. 15.

Al. 13. 10.

Thus poor miserable Man finds an endless torture in himself, which so wholly possesseth him, as to seem not to admit of any further Degrees, if my Text did not mind us that the great Enemy of Man-kind, the Devil, is ever active and restless in adding all the weight and sharpness he can to this Bondage; who besides his Tyranny and Usurpation upon men, which could not exceed the extent that Gods Permission had given it for the Punishment of former sins; and besides whatever claim he might make to men upon their Voluntary submission to him, as consequent upon his having seduced them from their obedience to their Creator; which yet, seeing that they had no right to dispose of themselves, and that their continued slavery was an addition to their Crime, as well as to their Misery, could not give him any just right or Dominion over them: I say besides all this, the Devil

doth come upon Man with a more dreadful assault, as having his fury armed with a Commission from God; as the Executioner of his Wrath upon Malefactors already adjudged to death, and consequently is said, as to the never-failing success of what his malice could prompt him to, to have *had the power of death*.

So that Man, as considered without an Interest in what Christ hath done for him, was in a double Bondage of Sin and of Punishment. The Devil was the Anchor of, and the Solicitor to Sin, by the entrance of which into the World Death also entred, and passed upon all Men, for that all have sinned; And through Sin it was that he had the power of death, that is, of inflicting death both of body and Soul. By this it was that the Devil reigned over Men to their eternal destruction: For in that sense this Kingdom of his may be conceived to be fitly called *Τὸ κράτος τοῦ θανάτου*, the Empire & Dominion of death, from the effect of it, in that it was deadly and destructive to Man.

But to the great joy of us all, and that we may ever adore and magnifie the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and submit our selves to God, the one Law-giver, who is able to save and to destroy, having now this assurance, that if we resist the Devil, he will flee from us, this dreadful Empire is now brought to its fatal period, and the Tyrant, as such, being

being wholly deprived of his Tyranny, is destroyed too, as if he were not at all, as to any hurt that he can do us; our strong *Helper* and mighty *Deliverer*, the holy and ever blessed Jesus, God and Man, having rescued us out of the jaws of death and destruction, by destroying him that had the power of it. The promised *Seed of the Woman* hath punished that *piercing and crooked Serpent*, hath broken the head of that *fierce and terrible Leviathan*, in such a way as that he hath truly shewed himself to be the *Seed of the Woman*. The Conquest was obtained by him in Humane nature, and that not without receiving such Wounds as he in that nature was capable of, not without the honourable marks of a Bloody Victory. For, as Christ the *Seed of the Woman*, did bruise the Serpents *Head*; so also the Serpent was permitted to bruise his *Heel*. Through *Death* he destroyed him that had the *Power of death*. Isa. 27. 1.  
Psal. 74. 14.

Gen. 3. 15.

And now having thus far given some account of the several words and expressions in my Text, the full import of the Doctrine of it will be more clearly stated, by comparing the proper Notion of the Bondage and Deliverance there mentioned with some few particulars which are to be considered, as they are *Dependant* and *Consequent* upon that which is primarily to be understood; or as they belong to that Application,

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which it is but reasonable we should make of the whole to our selves.

1. That there is a Yet-remaining Bondage, to which the Fear of Death doth make Particular men Subject, must be acknowledged, which may admit of several Degrees, as they are more or less the Servants of Sin; Because, not having the Spirit of Christ, not through the Spirit mortifying the deeds of the Body; But serving divers Lusts and Pleasures, living in Malice and Envy, Hateful and Hating one another; They must in their own Thoughts be concluded to be so far from having any Benefit by that Deliverance which Christ hath obtained, as in truth to be the Enemies of the Cross of Christ. Though the Gospel of Christ be preached unto them as well as unto others, yet the Word preached doth not profit them, not being mixed with Faith in them; not begetting that Hope in them, by which they are enabled to purifie themselves, to have always a Conscience void of offence toward God, and toward Men.
- Rom. 6. 16, 17, &c.  
Rom. 8. 9, 13.  
Tit. 3. 3.  
Eph. 3. 18.  
Heb. 4. 2.  
1. John 3. 3.  
Aq. 24. 16.

And therefore (unless they be grossly deluded) being sensible that the Death of Christ is of no Advantage to them, while they Continue in an impenitent State; It is impossible but that they must Fear Death, and cannot be supposed even to think themselves Delivered from this Fear, by the Death of Christ.

But the Bondage in my Text, and our Deliverance



verance from it, are in this present Discourse to be looked upon, not with respect to the Particular Subject, but to the Common Nature of Man, Christ himself only excepted : The Bondage as incident to Humane Nature, as Fallen and Depraved ; And the Deliverance from it, as that which All men stand in Need of, and of which all are Capable, as to the Foundation of it, that is laid in the Death of Christ, and with the Refusal of which all are Chargeable, to whom the tender of it is made by the Preaching of the Gospel.

We are All either Actually under it, or, as to any thing that is in our selves, Subject to the greatest extremity of it, or we are in some Measure actually Delivered from the Effects of it, and have a comfortable prospect of a Compleat Deliverance. *All have Sinned, and come short of the glory of God ; Being justified freely by his Grace, Rom. 3. 23, through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ. Only* <sup>24</sup> of this, to prevent all Presumption, we must ever be mindful, that those Only are the persons to whom now there is no Condemnation, who *are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit ; Such in whom the Law of the Spirit of Life, in Christ Jesus, hath made them Free from the Law of Sin and Death.* Rom. 8. 1, 2.

2. There is also a Farther Bondage, which is Consequent on the Fear of Temporal Death, when,

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when Men for Fear of Persecution, or Death, do commit Sin, or neglect any part of their Duty; by that means endeavouring to avoid what they fear; our Deliverance from which is Consequent upon our cordial Belief of that Deliverance which Christ hath obtained for us by his Death. For if we truly believe That, and acquiesce in it as our Happiness, Why should we be afraid of them which *Kill the Body, but are not able to Kill the Soul?* Nay, doth not our Faith, if it be lively and sincere, teach us above all things to fear him, which is able to Destroy both Soul and Body in Hell? Ever fearing lest a Promise being left us of entering into Gods rest, any of us should fail of it through Unbelief: Of which there can be no greater instance than by Slighting that Deliverance our Saviour hath obtained for us, to declare that we place no Confidence in it.

*Mat. 10. 28.**Heb. 4. 1. & c.*

3. There is also a Fear of Death, to which Weak, though Sincere Christians may be in some measure Subject, which may at Sometimes so much Disturb them, as to Approach very near to the Bondage here in my Text; and which is at all times both their Unhappiness and their Sin. This proceeds from great Defects in their Faith, and in other Graces, and generally from great Neglect of what their holy Profession doth call them to.

Now,



Now, though the serious Consideration of the Deliverance here in my Text, and mens hearty Endeavors to *work out* their Interest in it, *with fear and trembling* of another nature, and of a better temper, are fit Means under the Conduct and assistance of Gods Grace, wholly to Suppress or Mitigate these Fears; Yet our Deliverance from This fear of Death, is not the thing I am in Particular to consider, but only in General, as there is a sufficient Foundation laid for this Deliverance, if it be fully Assented to, and duly Applied. *Phil. 2. 12.*

The Main thing therefore to be considered in our Deliverance from the Fear of Death, through the Death of our ever blessed and most compassionate Redeemer, and through the unexpressible Love of God to Man-kind, is this, That *Christ hath Redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us.* *Gal. 3. 13.* Our being obnoxious to the eternal Wrath and Anger of God, was the Only thing that was formidable in Death, and This being taken away by the Death of Christ, there is nothing remains in Death, as it is a bare Separation of Soul and Body, why we should be afraid of it. All those that are truly Penitent and Regenerate by the grace of Gods Spirit, have now abundant reason for a perpetual Security and calmness of mind, either in Life or Death. To all such  
To

*Phil. 1. 21.* *To live is Christ, and to die is gain.* They can look chearfully upon Death, and will not commit the least Sin to decline it.

It is only their Way to Happiness, and all the Harshness that it seems to have, is from some Natural Difficulties, which the God of Nature seems to have implanted in Men, that they might not be out of love with Life, and unwilling to serve God here in their Generations, till their Change come. To which, when a Good man doth understand that he is now made to approach by Providence, and the good Hand of God, all those natural Impressions, being useless, do then give place to the Exercise of Faith; And he doth not only calmly resign his Spirit into the hands of God, and trust the Salvation of his Soul with his gracious Redeemer, but to Depart this Life, and to enter upon a better, becomes now his Wish and his Choice.

For he is so far now from fearing Everlasting Death, that he hath a clear prospect of an happy Eternity: Seeing that Christ hath not only abolished death, but hath brought life and immortality to light, through the Gospel. He hath no longer the Spirit of Bondage to fear, but the Spirit of Adoption, whereby he can cry, *Abba, Father.*

*Rom. 5. 1,*  
*2, 3.* Being justified by Faith, he hath not only Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, but by him also he hath access by Faith into this Grace, wherein he

he stands; And doth rejoice in *Hope of the Glory of God*; And can therefore glory in whatever *Tribulations* can befall him. Nothing Before could ease him of his *Bondage*, but he was *subject* to it all his *Life-time*: And nothing Now can disturb the *Serenity* of his mind. Our *Spiritual Freedom* is extended as far as the *Bondage* was, from which we are freed, even to the *finishing* of our whole *course*. For being *delivered out of the hands* of all our *Enemies*, we are enabled to *serve God without fear* of any of them, in *holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our Life*. 2 Tim. 4. 7.  
Luke 1. 4 7.  
75.

I must further add, that the *Doctrine* of my Text thus explain'd, is so far from giving encouragement to Sin; that this *Deliverance* which we have from the fear of *Eternal Death*, by the *Death of Christ*, is in truth one of the most powerful *Motives* to *Holiness of life*: Seeing that we are hereby assured that our pious *Endeavours* will be *Accepted* of in *Christ*, and meet with their wish'd for *Success*, which without the knowledge of our *Peace* being made with *God*, no man could have any *Assurance* of. If it were not for This, All that we could do, would be indeed worse than at a *Peradventure*, and could have no better *Grounds* to warrant its *Acceptance* with *God*, in order to the *Saving* of our *Souls*, than only such seemingly fair *Hopes*, and probable *Conjectures*, as a Well-bred *Hea-*

then might have had, to enforce the application of himself to the study and practice of such Political Virtues as might be beneficial to Man-kind; and to keep up that *Decorum* which the very Manliness of the apprehensions and powers which he had, might require from him, in order to his supposing of his Condition to be less hazardous, when he should leave this World. Of whom it may yet be presumed, That his Knowledge of that fatal Curse which lay upon all Man-kind, was as slender as his Ability could be, to direct all he did to the Glory of God, which yet is in truth the very Soul and Life of Religion.

Col. 1. 22.

It is therefore to be well observed what St. Paul saith to the *Colossians*, That Christ did reconcile them unto God in the Body of his flesh through Death, that he might present them holy and unblameable, and unreprouable in his sight.

Before they were Reconciled to God, they could not be thus Unblameable and Unreprouable in any sense; And After they were reconciled to God, we must suppose that there were many Defects in them, which if God had been extream to observe in the greatest Rigour, they could not have been able to have defended themselves against his severe Scrutiny. Yet they being Reconciled to God through the Blood of Christ, those instances of New Obedience, which  
by

by the Grace of God did truly proceed from the Honesty and Integrity of their Hearts, were so favourably Accepted of, that He that had before reconciled their Persons to God, through his Death, could consequently represent what they thus faithfully did, as Holy, Unblameable and Unreproveable in the sight of God; that is, Acceptable in his sight, free from all Charge of Sin from the Accuser of the Brethren.

Rev. 12. 10.

Thus I have given you some account of the Notion of the Bondage mentioned in my Text, and of the Nature of that Deliverance which we have through the Death of Christ, from the Fear of Death: Which in short is this, That Christ did suffer Death upon the Cross in our stead, that we might be freed from Eternal Death; That our Guilt being taken away, we might be Discharged from that Curse, to which we were obnoxious by the breach of Gods Law; And consequently, That being dead with Christ, we may believe that we shall also live with him, having this undoubted Assurance, to encourage us to lead such Lives as become Christians; That, if we have been planted together in the likeness of his Death, we shall be also in the likeness of his Resurrection.

Rom. 6. 5, 8.

Having therefore by Gods Assistance dispatched the First thing I proposed to my self, to treat of in this Discourse, I now come readily. To offer to your most serious Thoughts

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some of the most pertinent Considerations I can think of, to quicken our Apprehensions of the whole matter, and dispose us for Receiving the kindly Influences of all, in such a way as may be most agreeable to the Solemn Occasion of our meeting together This Day.

Had you One in this Place that were able fully and clearly to lay before you the Subject that This Day calls upon us to Consider, What warm Affections would it beget in you! What Tears would it draw from your eyes! What Esteem and value would you have for the *Christian* Religion, the Foundation of which, and of all our hopes and expectation is laid in what we this day commemorate!

All Vice and Sin might reasonably be presumed to remain for ever odious to your thoughts; and all Virtue and Goodness to have that Charming Aspect as to command your rational Choice, as well as your passionate Address. Good men would be confirmed in their Faith, Love, Meekness, Patience, and all virtuous Resolutions: And bad men would be ashamed that they had so long trifled away their precious Time, and would condemn themselves of the greatest Folly, for neglecting so great Salvation, and not having vouchsafed to stretch out a hand to receive so signal and important a Deliverance, tendered to them with such astonishing



ing Condescension, such compassionate and tender Regard to their most deplorable State, and recommended to them, from our Saviours ready undertaking of so many Hardships to persuade them to be Wise for Themselves, and to Love Themselves, and to espouse their own Interest.

*For a good Man some would even dare to die; But* Rom. 5. 7, 8.  
*God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us.* And, Can any Love be conceived to be like This of our Saviours, which exceeds the highest expressions of Kindness and Pity that ever any one hath shew'd to his most dearly beloved Friend, in the greatest need and Streight in which he can be imagined at any time to have been?

What strength would all this add to your Faith! What amazing thoughts would you have of the Wisdom of God, even the *Wisdom which God hath ordained before the World unto our glory!* 1 Cor. 2. 7, 9.  
*Such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it ever entred into the heart of man!*

How would you weep for our Saviours Sufferings, and yet much of it proceed from Joy, when you should have well considered how he contrived that he might be capable of Suffering for us, and then readily received the bitter Cup from his Fathers hands! He First *made himself of* Phil. 2. 7, 8.  
*no reputation, and took upon him the form of a Servant, and Then he humbled himself yet farther, and be-*  
*came*

# *A Sermon Preach'd on Good-Friday,*

*came obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.* To Death, which is so Dreadful, that even upon a Natural account it hath been judged to be of all things most Terrible. As being so contrary to Flesh and Blood, so repugnant to Nature, so destructive of all those Endearments, which our nearest Relations, Familiarities and Friendships, and even that natural Propensity there is in man to Society, have contracted. Which puts a Period to all those Enjoyments which are agreeable to all those Capacities and Desires, which our present Condition, even without the loss of Virtue and Honour, cannot chuse but acknowledge to be Grateful, and which by long Custom and Usage do prescribe to that Claim which it is not easie for us to disown as wholly Unreasonable.

He became obedient to *Death* for our sake; which, if it had nothing else in it, is yet a Privation of that which every mans Experience, both of Himself, and of what he may observe in Others, will tell him to be sweet: And That too, the Death of the Cross, a painful, lingring, ignominious, and accursed Death.

How many farther Advantages might we receive from fixing a stedfast look upon *Jesus* the Author and finisher of our Faith, who for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the shame!

Heb. 12. 2.

Could



Could any thing hereafter discourage us from being Constant in our holy Profession, from Persevering in all Christian Duties to the end?

Could it possibly be that we should be wearied *Ver. 3.* and faint in our minds, if we did but seriously consider him that endured such contradiction of Sinners against himself?

Our Deliberate Thoughts of our Saviours Death and Passion would clear up to us many important Truths. Could any man, after he had well thought of it, doubt of the Guilt that lies upon all Man-kind, or of the Corruption and Depravation of our Nature, seeing that the Salvation of Man did require thus much to be done?

Could he think himself sufficiently Secured from Danger by such Exercise of his natural Powers as may possibly be in many instances at his Command?

Would the acquiring of Political Vertues, nay, his Heroick courage in the Practice of them, stand him in sufficient stead?

Could any man be ignorant of the Use of the Law, to Shew us our Sin, to Reprove us and Condemn us for it, and so to make way for a firm & lively Faith upon a Crucified Jesus, that should stedfastly look on him whom our Sins have pierced, and should call to mind what St. Paul *Job. 19. 37.* hath taught us, That as Sin is the Sting of Death,  
so

*1 Cor. 15. 56.* *So the Law is the strength of Sin; And that as many as are of the works of the Law, are under the Curse?*  
*Gal. 3. 10.*

Could any such doubt of the need we have of the Consolations of the Gospel, who should First have in his thoughts that Expression of the Psalmist, with which we usually begin our Publick Devotions, *Enter not into judgment with thy Servant, O Lord: For in thy sight shall no man living be justified: And Then should consider how St. Paul applies this general Truth to himself, That he desired to be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by Faith: And that he tells us, That however there were many in the World who valued themselves upon Wisdom (by which, for all that, they were not able to know God) Yet the main thing that he put a Value on, was the knowledge of Christ Crucified?*  
*Psal. 143. 2.*  
*Phil. 3. 9.*  
*1 Cor. 1. 20, 21.*  
*1 Cor. 2. 2.*

Of so great Importance is it to us, in all these respects, and for the inciting of us to all Courage and Resolution in the doing of our Duty; Such an abundant matter will it afford us of Praising and magnifying the Wisdom and Mercy of God, and the Love and compassionate Kindness of our gracious Redeemer; Such powerful Motives will it afford us to love, fear, and obey God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent: So much

much are we concerned to have the Subject of This Day, and of my Text firmly fixed and rooted in our Minds, and in our Hearts! Even This so great and necessary Truth of Christ's dying for us, and thereby delivering us from the Fear of Death, and from the eternal Wrath of God; To which we were before Obnoxious, and so should have been to all eternity, without any Hopes of Deliverance from this dreadful Bondage, or without any Possibility that by any thing we could do, we should be Accepted of by God, and admitted to his Favour, If we were not assured from the great Mercy which we this day Commemorate, That it is the Blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, that doth purge our Conscience from dead works to serve the living God. *Heb. 9. 14.*

Two things therefore more I shall briefly do,  
 1. I shall give some more particular account from the Scripture of Christs Dying for us. And  
 2. I shall point at some of those Heads from whence your own Thoughts may make a yet farther, and a more close Practical Improvement of the whole.

1. Some more particular account from the Scripture.

1. The Death of Christ is represented to us in the Scripture as a Propitiatory Sacrifice, and the Price of our Redemption. By him we have *Rom. 5. 11.*

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V. 10.

V. 1.

now received the Atonement. And, When we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son. We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. He hath made peace through the Blood of his Cross, Colos. 1. 20. We have Redemption through his Blood, even the forgiveness of sins, Colos. 1. 14. The Chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed, Isa. 53. 5.

And this is more apparent, because together with the mention of This, there is a manifest Intimation of Gods Acceptance of it in our Stead. Christ is said by the Grace of God, to have tasted Death for every man, Heb. 2. 9. In our Stead he suffered Death, and Gods Grace and special Favour is acknowledged in all this, in that it was For Us that he died, that God Accepted it, As Such. And therefore God's Love did appear to the World in giving his only begotten Son; In sending him, that the World through him might be saved, John 3. 16, 17. God by all This hath shewed himself so clearly to be for us, that the Apostle asks the question, Who then can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, How shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Ele&t? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh Intercession for us, Rom. 8. 31, 32,

33, 34. His Resurrection giving abundant evidence of the Dignity of the Sacrifice of his Death, and of Gods gracious Acceptance of it, And his Intercession for us, making good to us the Effects of it.

2. That Gods Favour to us was to be obtained in This Way, namely, by the Death of Christ, is so clearly foretold in *Isa. 53.* that nothing can be more. And the same was also Typified by the *Paschal Lamb*, by the *Sacrifices*, and by what the *High-Priest* did on the great Day of *Atonement*. Thus Christ did *put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself*, *Heb. 9. 26.* By his own Blood he obtained eternal Redemption for us, *Ver. 12.*

3. That this should be done, is represented to us in the Scripture as a gracious and wise Contrivance of God, and as an Agreement between God the Father, and the Son. Thus what was done against Jesus, is said to have been before determined by the Hand and Counsel of God. And *Act. 2. 23.* the Jews are said to have taken Jesus, and by wicked hands to have crucified and slain him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God.

*Act. 4. 27, 28.*

And as to the Agreement between God the Father and the Son, that the Son should do all this on our behalf, we read *Isa. 53. 10, 11.* of the Lords bruising him and putting him to grief, and of making his Soul an offering for Sin, and that he should bear the Iniquities of many. Upon his do-

Bp. Pearson on the Creed, p. 185.

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ing all which, it's said, that he shall see his Seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. Now the Declaration of the Sons Readiness to do all this, that so all might be effected that was agreed to by the Father to follow upon it, is expressed, *Heb. 10. 5. &c. Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a Body hast thou prepared me: In Burnt-offerings and Sacrifices for Sin thou hast had no pleasure: Then said I, Lo, I come to do thy Will, O God.* And the Apostle adds, *ver. 10. By the which Will we are Sanctified, through the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all.* Than all which nothing can be more clear: So that those men must be supposed to Delight in Contradiction, that can be bold and forward to object any thing against the manifest Evidence of all this.

4thly, and lastly, The Scripture doth give us some Grounds, according to our weak measure of judging of the great and high things of God, wherupon we may observe the Fitness of all this, and the Suitableness of those Means that have been used, to the good and wise Ends for which they were used.

That an Expiation in general was necessary, Mans Weakness to fulfil the Law doth seem to be one Reason, *Rom. 8. 3. What the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for*



for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: Or, (as the Expression for sin, *Περί αμαρτίας*, is otherwise expressed in the Margent of that Place) By a Sacrifice for sin be condemned sin in the flesh.

And many Reasons have been given, why a Satisfaction should be made, before God would pardon Sin, with respect to the Holiness of God, and to the securing a due Honour and Regard to his Law, and to the expressing how Odious Sin was in the sight of God. That so men, by having Pardon over-easily granted, might not be Encouraged to Sin, or at least not so much Deterr'd from it: And that we might the better judge of All This by considering at what a heavy Price our Redeemer purchased Pardon for us.

And the Wisdom of God doth farther appear in this, That the Price of our Redemption was to be paid in Our Nature: In which Nature also he was to take Possession of Heaven; and therefore, a little before he left this World, he laid this Consideration before his Sorrowful Disciples to Comfort them, *I go to prepare a Place for you, that where I am, there ye may be also.* *Job. 14.2,3.*

Other Reasons may also be given in Explication of such Places as these, namely, That the Captain of our Salvation was to be made perfect *Heb. 2. 10.* through Sufferings; And, That Christ ought to have *Luke 24.26.* suffered these things, and to enter into his glory. For, besides

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besides the Correspondence that cannot but be between what God hath Fore-told, and what doth come to pass, it may not be unfit to observe a Denotation in all this of Gods Ordinary Methods in dealing with the Sons of Men; He having thought it convenient to Exercise them with many Hardships before he bring them to an Immutable Happines. And therefore, God having determined that those whom he *purposed* to *Glorifie* should, even in this respect, be *Con-formed to the Image of his Son*, It was necessary that by Suffering he should be the *First-born among many Brethren*.

Rom. 8.28,  
29.

And therefore we should Learn from what befel him to Expect Sufferings, and from his Example both to be Willing to suffer, and How to suffer; That God is to be Glorified in All that we are, or are Capable of, as well in Suffering as in Doing, That we should never decline any Suffering, or any Occasion of it, for *Righteousness sake*: And that, even when we *suffer wrongfully*, we are so to behave our selves as by our Christian-like Deportment to express that Meekness, Patience and Submission, and hearty Praying for our Persecutors, which he did express to the wonder of all that beheld him. We must hence learn to be *Subject* to all those that have Authority over us, *not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward*: For unto this matter doth

Mat. 5. 10.  
1 Pet. 2. 18,  
&c.

St. Peter



St. Peter apply the Argument he fetcheth from what our Saviour suffered, 1 Pet. 2. 21. Telling us that Hereunto we are called, because that Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an Example, that we should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who when he was reviled, reviled not again: When he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. This reason of the Fitness of our Saviours Sufferings is very Pious, and the Application of it most Necessary.

But whatever Reasons we may take notice of, they must all be considered with respect to Gods Decree and good pleasure, and may not so be laid down as to make what We may Apprehend as Necessary, a Limiting of the absolute Freedom of the Divine Will.

Which being premised, I am willing a little farther to insist upon the Consideration of the Fitness that Christ should take Our nature upon him, and therein suffer for us, from what we read in the next Verse but one after my Text, That It behoved him in all things to be made like unto his Brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High-Priest, in things pertaining to God, to make Reconciliation for the Sins of the people. Upon these Two things I shall lay the main Stress of the matter, and consider them in such a way as may be most pertinent to the main Subject of my Text.

1. That

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1. That he might be a *Merciful High-Priest*,  
 the eternal Son of God took our nature upon  
 him. Not that he needed this to make any Ad-  
 dition to his Mercy, which is infinite; but that  
 having those Affections that are Common to our  
 nature, and in our nature having had a lively  
*Heb. 4. 15.* Sense and Experience of our *Infirmities*, We ac-  
 cording to that infinite distance there is between  
 the Incomprehensible and Self-sufficient God,  
 and our poor Defective and Polluted nature,  
 might with the greater Assurance go to this *Em-*  
*Mat. 1. 23.* *manuel*, this *God with us*, to the Word that was made  
*John 1. 14.* *flesh and dwelt among us*, and lay open all our  
*1 Tim. 2. 5.* wants before him, as the *One Mediator between*  
*God and Men*, the *Man Christ Jesus*.

For, the infinite Perfections of God, which  
 are nothing else but the one same uncompound-  
 ed Essence, though apprehended by us under  
 differing Conceptions, which we call Justice,  
 Mercy, Power, &c. are so far above our Com-  
 prehension, that when according to our Mea-  
 sure we endeavour to form such Notions of them  
 as may be a sufficient Ground for our Trust and  
 Confidence, without the least Wavering, or even  
 Suspicion that our Ignorance may be Prejudi-  
 cial to us, we find our minds so Dazled with the  
 exceeding glory of the Object, and our thoughts  
 so divided, and many times Contrary to each o-  
 ther; that the more we Think of that which  
 cannot be Comprehended by us, the more we  
 are

are Confounded, and do at last find it Impossible to have any firm Rest and assurance for the Soul, which can pretend to Exceed that Discovery we have of God in Christ. He that considers what our Saviour hath told us of himself, *I am the way and the truth, and the life: No man cometh unto the Father but by me,* must be wanting to himself in admitting that light which he may receive, if he be at any loss in the certainty of this, That as in Christ we have all requisite Knowledge of God, so in and through him we can only expect to find the Great God, *who is Glorious in Holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders,* to be propitious to us. Job. 14. 6.  
Exod. 15. 11.

It is therefore our Happiness that we have an High-Priest, who having taken our Nature upon him, hath thereby brought what is Necessary for us to know of God to that Measure that we are able to reach to. The safest Prospect we can take of Gods infinite Attributes, is in him that is *the brightness of Gods glory, and the express Image of his Person.* Heb. 1. 3. And though it may be a dangerous Curiosity to lanch out too far into this Depth, yet this is our Comfort, and it should be our main Concern, that we have in Christ not only a Satisfactory, but even a Glorious discovery of that particular Attribute of God, in which our lost Condition is chiefly concerned, even that of *Mercy* in our *Merciful High-Priest.*

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2. It behoved the Son of God to be made like unto his Brethren, that he might be a *faithful High-Priest*, in things pertaining to God; to make Reconciliation for the Sins of the People.

He having Undertaken to make Reconciliation, and by so doing to shew himself in a most eminent manner to be *our High-Priest*, and the Manner of this reconciliation being Agreed on between the Father and the Son, how could it be but that the only Happinels of Sinful and Miserable Men must depend upon the making of such a reconciliation as would be Effectual? How can we apprehend Christ to have been a *Merciful High-Priest*, but we must conclude that he was therefore a *Faithful High-Priest*? His Mercy inclined him to Compassionate our misery, and to Intercede with God for Pardon, as *our High-Priest*, and therefore as *our Faithful High-Priest*, he did not only Intercede for us, but he interceded for us Powerfully. He did all that in the Wisdom and Decree of God was necessary to obtain our Reconciliation. Thus in all things he was like unto his brethren, that he might be a *faithful High-Priest*; that what we had need of, and what his undertaking the Office of Mediator did teach us to expect, might fully answer our Wants and our Expectation from it.

2 Cor. 1. 20.

*All the promises of God are in Christ Ies, and in him Amen.* Every Declaration of the Favour and

Love

Love of God the Father to us, is to have its Completion through Christ, in whom as his beloved Son, *Matt. 3. 17.* he is well pleased, and in whom alone he is Propitious to us. And this Declaration of Peace on *Luk. 2. 14.* Earth, and Good will towards Men, is so surely Founded, and firmly Ratified in Christ, that we are taught to ground our Expectation of it upon the Faithfulness of God: In so much, that in the general, every Act of a truly Christian and lively Faith, by which we receive the Testimony of Christ, is a setting to our Seal that God is true; and *Job. 3. 33.* in particular, If we confess our sins (which will contain our Acknowledgment of Guilt and Obnoxiousness to Divine Wrath, and our looking upon Christ as the Propitiation for our Sins, together with that true Repentance, and sincere Affection of the Heart, which this Confession as being made not to Man, but to God, doth require) we are then taught to look upon God, as one that is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us *1 Job. 1. 9.* from all unrighteousness.

But now, As all this declares the Faithfulness of God, and the Excellency of Faith, which not only ascribes the greatest Honour to God, but receives that Honour from God, as to have no less Evidence of its Certainty, than there is of the Unchangeableness of God himself; seeing that it is impossible but that God should Accept what he hath freely declared, that he will accept on

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our behalf from him whom he hath appointed the Mediator between himself and us : So all this doth suppose that this Mediator doth faithfully perform what, as such, he undertakes to perform, in order that it may be Accepted of by God.

Rom. 3. 25.  
25.

And therefore, seeing that the Holy Spirit of God in Scripture hath declared, That God hath set forth Christ to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness for the Remission of sins that are past, through the Forbearance of God : That he might be just, and the justifier of him that Believeth in Jesus, It becomes necessary, according to this wise Appointment of God, and the agreement between Himself and the one Mediator, between God and Men, that this Mediator should be made like unto us, and in this likeness, that is, in our nature, suffer for our sins : That he might be a faithful High Priest, that he might in truth and reality, and in the rigor of Justice perform all, in things pertaining to God, which was thus necessary to make reconciliation for the sins of the People. Even all that, as our High Priest, he had undertaken to perform for our Perfect and Full Reconciliation, and without which God was not obliged by any thing that he had freely Promised to Accept of his Offering in our stead. For from what hath been said, and from the farther evidence of that Place (with which I will shut up  
this.



this point) *It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and (having made peace through the blood of his Cross) by him to reconcile all things to himself, it is put beyond all doubt that the Fathers Reconciling all things to Himself by the Son, was no otherwise in the purpose and decree of God practicable, but by the Peace which Christ made by the Blood of his Cross.* Col. 1. 19, 20.

In all this we may discern much, though we cannot reach to the whole, of that astonishing Wisdom and Goodness which is in the Scripture set forth to us, in that the eternal Son of God took upon him our nature, that in that Nature he might by Death deliver us from that Bondage to which we were subject through Fear of Death; from which we have the greater security, because though it could be performed in his humane nature only, yet the Dignity of his Person added an inestimable value to his sufferings. It was the Eternal Son of God, very God of very God, who *when the fulness of time was come, was made of a Woman, was made under the Law: It was the Word which was made Flesh, and dwelt among us: It was the Prince of Life, the Lord of Glory, who suffered in humane nature, which he Assumed into the Unity of his Person; being put to death in that Flesh, according to which he was made of the Seed of David, but as considered in an inseparable Conjunction with that Spirit of Holiness, according* Bp. Pearson on the Creed, p. 186. Gal. 4. 4. Job. 1. 14. Ab. 3. 15. 1 Cor. 2. 8. Rom. 1. 3. 4.

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ding to which he was declared to be the Son of God with Power, by the Resurrection from the dead.

*Psal.* 116.  
12.

*Job.* 7. 17.

*Gal.* 5. 5.

And now, what shall we render unto the Lord for all his Benefits towards us? What is Man, O merciful God, and gracious Redeemer, that thou shouldst thus magnifie him, and that thou shouldst set thine heart upon him? How should this give us such a deep sense of the great things of our Religion, as may quicken and encrease in us all requisite Graces, as may shew us our Misery by nature, and lay more closely before us the Hope of Righteousness by Faith, which through the Spirit we wait for! How should this encrease our Humility, our hatred of Sin, our Gratitude, and an unfeigned Resolution of the most universal Obedience that we can possibly yield to the Faith, and to the Truth, and to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ! Who besides all the other Obligations he hath laid upon us to obey him, doth now more especially call upon us, not only to consider that Victory which through him we have over Death, Sin, and the condemning Power of the Law, but also to consider him as the Captain of our Salvation, giving us a signal instance by those sufferings he did voluntarily undergo, of that Obedience in which we must always be ready to imitate him, whatever the Trials of it may be, that our Heavenly Father may think good to call us to, and that indispensably, if we expect any benefit by what he hath

hath done and suffered. For so the Apostle tells us, *Heb. 5. 8. 9.* That though he were a Son, yet learned he Obedience by the things which he suffered, and being made perfect, he became the Author of eternal Salvation unto all them that obey him.

Which Obedience that we may ever judge our selves infinitely obliged to pay, and be heartily willing to pay it to the utmost, let us ever have in our thoughts what he hath suffered for us, and that our sins were the Cause of all, the Meritorious cause of his Sufferings, and that which gave the sharpness to them; but especially let us be mindful of that incomparable Love which this proceeded from, That so from the pleasing force of its constraint, as by a compendious way, and yet no less expressive of all those Bonds of duty which the Mercy we this day commemorate doth lay upon us, not permitting any Circumstance of it to want its due moments of weight, we may as from the joynt sense of all, be prevailed with to live as those that expect that Deliverance which our most compassionate Saviour hath by his own Death obtained for us. That we may live in all Holiness of life, and die with comfort, Looking for that blessed Hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Who gave himself for us, that he might Redeem us from all Iniquity, and

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*Purifie unto himself a peculiar People, Zealous of good Works:* To whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost be ascribed, as it most due, All Praise, Honour, and Glory, henceforth, and for ever. *Amen.*

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